# Outdoor Cooking and Grilling

# Food Preparation

- Keep meat chilled until you're ready to cook it.
- Allow meat to completely thaw in the refrigerator before placing on the grill.
- Wash hands frequently with soapy water when working with raw meat.
- Keep food and drink separate.
- Avoid cross contamination. A prime cause of summer food-borne illness is the transfer of bacteria from uncooked to cooked meat.

# Food Preparation (cont’d)

- Don't forget the cutting board. Remember to wash all cutting boards and containers that touched uncooked meat in hot, soapy water.
- Use a meat thermometer. Meat must reach a temperature of 160 degrees before it is safe to serve. Use a thermometer to avoid serving undercooked meat.
- Take out the trash. Dispose of all refuse in a covered bin or trash receptacle.

# Food Preparation (cont’d)

- Keep it cool. Avoid overgrowth of bacteria by storing food in a refrigerator/cooler within two hours of serving. When the temperature rises above 85 degrees, food should generally be stored in a cool place within one hour of serving.
- Leftovers should be packed in clean containers and put back in the coolers.
- When in doubt, throw it out. Food left out for more than two hours has often been contaminated as a result of heat exposure. Don't take any chances.

# Charcoal Grill Safety Tips

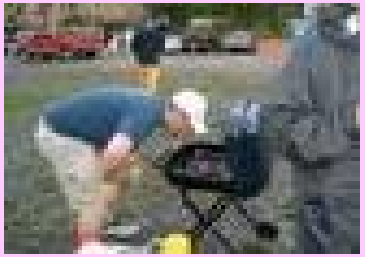
- Charcoal  produces carbon monoxide (CO). CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can accumulate to toxic levels in closed environments. Each year about 17 people die as a result of CO fumes from charcoal being burned indoors or in a poorly ventilated area.

- Never burn charcoal inside of homes vehicles, tents or campers.

- Charcoal continues to produce CO fumes until the charcoal is completely consumed or extinguished.

# Charcoal Grill Safety Tips (cont'd)

- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited, and never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to get the fire going.



- Keep children and pets far away from grills.

- When using barbecue grills on decks or patios, be sure to leave sufficient space from siding and eaves.

# Gas Grill Safety Tips

- Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Move gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease.
- Always keep propane gas containers upright.

# Gas Grill Safety Tips (cont’d)

- All gas cylinders manufactured after April 2002 must have overfill protection devices (OPD). OPDs shut off the flow of gas before capacity is reached, limiting the potential for release of propane gas if the cylinder heats up. OPDs are easily identified by their triangular-shaped hand wheel.
- Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.

# Gas Grill Safety Tips (cont’d)

- Never keep a filled container in a hot car or car trunk. Heat will cause the gas pressure to increase, which may open the relief valve and allow gas to escape.
- Make sure your spark igniter is consistently generating a spark to create a flame and burn the propane gas. If the flame is not visible, the heavier-than-air propane gas may be escaping and could cause an explosion.
- Never bring the propane tank into the house.

# Grilling is an American tradition, but be safe!